

08 AUG 1996

Everest

MORE SPONSORS NEEDED FOR MALAYSIA-EVEREST '97 PROJECT

KUALA LUMPUR, Aug 8 (Bernama) -- Malaysia-Everest '97 Project needs more sponsorship from commercial firms to meet the expenses of Malaysians out to conquer Mount Everest, the world's tallest peak, next year.

The project mooted by Prime Minister Datuk Seri Dr Mahathir Mohamad is expected to cost RM4.5 million.

"We need more sponsors to realise the project .. and I am told many are keen to do so," said Youth and Sports Minister, Tan Sri Haji Muhyiddin Yassin after the sponsorship signing ceremony between Malaysia-Everest Project and four companies here today.

Four firms which signed the agreement with the Malaysia-Everest Project were Dynasty Hotel, SMH Trading (M) Sdn Bhd -- supplier of Longines wrist watches, Eveready Battery Company (M) Sdn Bhd and The China Press Bhd.

He said the amount needed for the project was expected to be raised by the end of the month at the latest as more firms came in as sponsors.

He declined to state the amount already collected since the Malaysia - Everest Project was launched by the Prime Minister on June 4.

The project, organised by the Youth and Sports Ministry, (KBS) and Mountain Climbing Association of Malaysia (PMM) will be undertaken with the cooperation of the Utusan Group, which is the official newspaper, Radio Television Malaysia, (RTM) and Yayasan Budaya Sukan Malaysia (YBSM).

To prepare for the feat, 20 PMM members are now undergoing training.

The training which began in January is being conducted by Guy Cotter from "Adventure Expedition" of England.

Before 10 are selected for the climb, the 20 trainees will be tested in a pre-Everest climb next month.

The training will be conducted at Mt Cho Oyu (8,200m) and Mt Kamet (7,500m) in Nepal.

PMM president, Nor Ramlle Sulaiman, said selection would be based on experience, skills, physical and mental fitness.

The climbers would hoist the Malaysian flag on reaching the peak of Mount Everest in March next year.

-- BERNAMA

AHA MTA AAM